

As the collector, processor, and distributor of more than half of the Nation's voluntarily donated blood, the American Red Cross took the lead in implementing HTLV-III antibody testing, adding significantly to the effectiveness of recruitment and screening practices already in effect that protect more than one-and-a-half million recipients of blood and blood products from exposure to the deadly AIDS virus.

All of this was accomplished without the Red Cross cutting back on any of its continuing heavy responsibilities. Millions of our fellow citizens were taught lifesaving techniques in CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation), first aid, water safety, and small craft operation. More than half-a-million emergency messages were relayed worldwide between members of our Armed Forces and their loved ones back home. Nearly six million individuals were served at Red Cross blood pressure screenings and aid stations.

Providing the most efficient and effective help in times of emergency and disaster is an enormous task. But since its founding by Clara Barton in 1881 the American Red Cross has met the challenge. It has been able to do so only because millions of Americans have volunteered their money, time, and their hearts so that those services will always be available.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, and Honorary Chairman of the American National Red Cross, do hereby designate March 1986 as Red Cross Month, and I urge all Americans to give generous support to the work of the American Red Cross and to their local Red Cross chapters.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5446 of March 4, 1986

Women's History Week, 1986

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Women have contributed mightily to the growth of the United States and the success of the American experiment with democracy. Today, women of every race and ethnic background, whether single or married, with children or other dependents, continue to play leading roles in the enrichment of our Nation. They are contributing substantially to the growth of the economy and the development of our educational, political, commercial, judicial, and social systems. And they continue to sustain those family values so essential to the health of the Nation.

Women are making significant achievements in government and the private sector that will enhance employment opportunities for all Americans. As obstacles to full equality of opportunity are overcome, more and more women are successfully occupying an ever greater variety of demanding and rewarding careers. At the same time, women make an incomparable contribution as mothers and homemakers, whose vision, love, and example will shape the destiny of our country in the years to come.

It is appropriate that all Americans recognize the outstanding achievements of women and celebrate their unique and immense contributions to our Nation and its well-being.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 499, has designated the week beginning March 2, 1986, as "Women's History Week" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning March 2, 1986, as Women's History Week, and I call upon the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 4th day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and tenth.

RONALD REAGAN

Proclamation 5447 of March 14, 1986

Freedom of Information Day, 1986

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

A fundamental principle of our Government is that a well-informed citizenry can take part in the important decisions that set the present and future course of the Nation. Our Founding Fathers provided in the Constitution and in the Bill of Rights freedoms for all Americans, many of which are promoted by open access to information. Numerous Acts of Congress, including the Freedom of Information Act, are intended to further this principle. Most Americans, having never known any other way of life, take for granted open access to information about their Federal, State, and local governments. They also understand that some secrecy is necessary to protect both national security and the right to privacy.

March 16 is the anniversary of the birth of James Madison, our fourth President and one of the principal figures in the Constitutional Convention. Madison eloquently expressed the guarantees in the Bill of Rights, in particular in the freedoms of religion, speech, and of the press protected by the First Amendment. He understood the value of information in a democratic society, as well as the importance of its free and open dissemination. He believed that through the interaction of the Government and its citizens, facilitated by a free press and open access to information, the Government could be most responsive to the people it serves. Surely the American experience has proved him right.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the enactment by the Federal government of the Freedom of Information Act. On President Madison's birthday, it is particularly fitting that we recognize the value of reasonable access to information in our political process.

The Congress, by House Joint Resolution 371, has designated March 16, 1986, as "Freedom of Information Day" and authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this event.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 16, 1986, as Freedom of Information Day, and I call upon the people of the United States and all Federal, State, and local government officials to observe this week with appropriate programs and activities.